

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NEA-06 L-01 H-02 INR-05

PM-03 PRS-01 SP-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

/052 W

----- 084717

R 241036Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2739

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY SANAA

A EMBADSY ROME 715

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 0422

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SO

SUBJECT: SIAD'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS

SUMMARY.

DURING PAST TEN DAYS, INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN GOING

ON BEHIND SCENES IN MOGADISCIO BETWEEN PRESIDENT SIAD AND MORE RADICAL

ELEMENTS IN HIS ENTOURAGE, INCLUDING PRINCIPALLY MINDEFENSE GENERAL
MOHAMED SAMANTAR AND MARXIST ELEMENTS IN POLITICAL OFFICE OF
PRESIDENCY, WHO TOGETHER HAVE SOUGHT SIAD'S OUSTER. WE HAVE ALSO
RECEIVED SKETCHY REPORTS THAT SOVIET EMBASSY
MAY BE INVOLVED. WHILE

WE ARE DEEPLY SKEPTICAL OF ANY CLAIMS OF A SIAD/SOVIET FALLING OUT
AND ARE INCLINED TO ATTRIBUTE THEM TO SOVIET DISINFORMATION EFFORT:
NEVERTHELESS REPORTS WE HAVE RECEIVED, AS WELL AS BASIC SCENARIO, ARE
NOT RPT NOT WHOLLY WITHOUT SOME CREDIBILITY. AT PRESENT TIME, SOME
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TWENTY MEMBERS OF PRO-SOVIET POLITICAL OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY ARE UNDER

DETENTION AND WE HAVE REPORTS THAT SAMANTAR ALSO UNDER MEDICAL DETENTION.

SIAD IS IN MEANTIME TRYING TO RESOLVE CHALLENGE TO HIS LEADERSHIP AND RESTORE ORDER WITHOUT COMPROMISING HIS SOVIET SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE HAD REPEATED BUT FRAGMENTARY REPORTS OVER PAST TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS THAT NUMBER OF ARRESTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN MOGADISCIO: WITH PRINCIPAL DETAINEES BELONGING TO MOST RADICAL OR MARXIST ELEMENT IN GSDR ESTABLISHMENT. INITIAL DETAINEES INCLUDE AMONG OTHERS ABDULAZIZ NUR HERSI AND MOHAMMED WEIRAH -- REPORTEDLY UNDER HOUSE ARREST. INITIAL SPECULATION WAS THAT WHATEVER THEIR IDEOLOGICAL PERSUASION, THESE WERE FOR MOST PART MAJERTEN TRIBESMEN WHO HAD ENJOYED FINANCIAL PRIVILEGES UNDER PAST REGIME AND WERE DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR DOLE UNDER SIAD. IT WAS FIRST RUMORED THAT THEY HAD BEEN PUSHING OGADEN TRIBESMEN (MOGADISCIO 0388) TO OPPOSE SIAD AND MAY HAVE BEEN BEHIND FLURRY OF ANTI-SIAD TRACTS APPEARING IN MOGADISCIO STREETS. HERSI HIMSELF HAD HISTORY OF TRACT-MAKING AND HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR STREET AND SIDEWALK SCRATCHINGS IN 1968 OPPOSING VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY TO MOGADISCIO.

2. DESPITE SUSPICION THAT OGADEN AND MAJERTEN PEOPLES WERE BEHIND TRACT THROWING, OTHER OBSERVERS WERE FINALLY SKEPTICAL THAT TROUBLE-MAKERS COULD MOVE AS FREELY AS THEY DID WITHOUT SOME SUPPORT IN THE HIGHER ECHELONS OF THE GSDR, EITHER WITHIN THE SRC ITSELF OR PERHAPS THE NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE (NSS). ALSO POLICE AND GULWADDI PATROLLING MOGADISCIO STREETS AT NIGHTS WERE UNARMED AND WITHOUT VEHICLES - A FUTILE WAY TO INTERCEPT MOTORIZED TRACT THROWERS BUT EFFECTIVE IN PICKING UP THE CLUTTER AFTERWARDS AND PREVENTING ITS PUBLIC DISSEMINATION. TRACTS EVIDENTLY CALLED FOR SIAD TO STEP DOWN BUT ALSO DEMANDED DETAILED ACCOUNTING FOR DISTRIBUTION OF DROUGHT FOOD AID WHICH, TRACTS CLAIMED, WERE NOT RPT NOT REACHING PEOPLE.

3. REPORTS WERE ALSO CIRCULATING IN MOGADISCIO LAST WEEK THAT GEN. SAMANTAR HAD BEEN DETAINED BY SIAD AND THAT SERIES OF INCIDENTS OCCURRING ON OR ABOUT MARCH 11, INCLUDING FIRE AT GSDR WAREHOUSE AND THEFT OF SECRETS FROM MINDEFENSE, AS WELL AS TRACT DISTRIBUTION, WERE SOMEHOW RELATED.

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4. IN LAST SEVERAL DAYS, WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS FROM REASONABLY WELL INFORMED AND INDEPENDENT SOURCES WHICH PROVIDES LARGER AND MORE DETAILED SCENARIO FOR RECENT INCIDENTS. CURRENT POWER STRUGGLE REPORTEDLY INVOLVES MOST RADICAL ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL OFFICE, TOGETHER

WITH MINDEFENSE SAMANTAR, WHO HAVE ATTEMPTED TO GET RID OF SIAD. TRACT DISTRIBUTION IN MOGADISCIO, FIRE AT GSDR WAREHOUSE AND OTHER INCIDENTS WERE INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT PEOPLE HAD LOST CONFIDENCE

IN SIAD, THAT INTERNAL SECURITY IN MOGADISCIO HAD BROKEN DOWN AND THAT

RECALL OF MILITARY UNITS FROM INTERIOR WERE NECESSARY TO RESTORE PUBLIC ORDER. WHEN NEW ARMY UNITS ARRIVED, CERTAIN SELECTED YOUNG OFFICERS WERE TO CALL FOR FORMATION OF NEW MILITARY COUNCIL UNDER SAMANTAR AND TO OUST OLD LEADERSHIP, PRINCIPALLY SIAD. POLITICAL OFFICE WOULD HAVE STRONGER IDEOLOGICAL ROLE IN NEW GOVERNMENT. APPARENTLY SIAD LEARNED OF PLAN TO BRING MILITARY UNITS TO MOGADISCIO THROUGH TRIBAL LOYALISTS AMONG TROUP UNITS. (SAMANTAR DOES NOT RPT NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO RECALL TROUPS WITHOUT SIAD'S CONSENT.) SIAD MOVED QUICKLY AGAINST SAMANTAR AND PLACED HIM UNDER DETENTION IN MIL HOSPITAL.

5. SIAD ALSO ARRESTED SOME TWENTY MEMBERS OF POLITICAL OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY, WHO HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN RECRUITED TO PREPARE AND DISTRIBUTE

ANTI-SIAD TRACTS. POLITICAL OFFICE IS MARXIST BASTION IN GSDR AND IS STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY SOVIET EMBASSY, WHICH MAINTAINS CLOSE AND CONTINUING CONTACTS WITH YOUNG IDEOLOGUES. POLITICAL OFFICE INVOLVEMENT, TOGETHER WITH THAT OF SAMANTAR, LED SIAD TO SUSPECT THAT SOVIET EMBASSY IN MOGADISCIO HAD COLLABORATED IN ATTEMPTING HIS REMOVAL. ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT WE RECEIVED, SIAD STILL DOES NOT RPT NOT KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THE SOVIET CHALLENGE. HE BELIEVES THAT CONTINUED SOVIET SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL TO HIS REGIME, BUT THAT HE MUST NEVERTHELESS REACT TO SOVIET MACHINATIONS. HE ALLEGEDLY HAS BEEN ADVISED BY SOMEONE IN HIS INNER CIRCLE THAT HE SHOULD SEEK REMOVAL OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR SAMSONOV THROUGH GSDR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW. SOVIET INTERFERENCE WOULD THUS BE CONVENIENTLY LOCALIZED AND SIAD'S RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW COULD CONTINUE ON OLD BASIS.

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6. HE IS ALSO FACED WITH DILEMMA REGARDING BOTH SAMANTAR AND POLITICAL OFFICE DETAINEES. SAMANTAR ALLEGEDLY HAS RATHER SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT IN SOMALI MILITARY, AS WELL AS STRONG LINKS TO SOVIETS. IF SIAD WERE TO DEAL HARSHLY WITH SAMANTAR, HE MIGHT PROVOKE SOMALI MILITARY AND SOVIETS AS WELL. HE HAS EVIDENTLY RESERVED JUDGMENT ON SAMANTAR CASE BY CONFINING HIM TO HOSPITAL.

7. POLITICAL OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY PRESENTS FEWER PROBLEMS. HE CAN DEAL WITH YOUNG INTELLECTUALS WITH RELATIVE INPUNITY OVER SHORT TERM BUT OVER LONG TERM PUNITIVE MEASURES HE TAKES NOW WILL ALIENATE YOUNG IDEOLOGUES WHO HAVE PROVIDED PRINCIPAL INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL ENERGY IN GSDR FOR MASS POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION OF SOMALI PEOPLES.

8. POLITICAL OFFICE INVOLVEMENT IS CONFIRMED IN PART BY REPORTS WE HAVE HEARD FROM INDEPENDENT SOURCES IN RECENT WEEKS THAT POLITICAL WORKERS, FORMERLY SO AGGRESSIVE IN SUPPORT OF SIAD, HAVE COOLED OFF CONSIDERABLY AND SOME ARE NOW VIOLENTLY ANTI-SIAD, CONFIDENTIAL

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PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF ALIENATION NOT CLEAR BUT DISSATISFACTION MAY REFLECT LACK OF PROGRESS ON PARTY FORMATION, AN INCOMPLETE NATIONALIZATION POLICY, AS WELL AS SIAD'S PARTIAL SURRENDER TO ARAB BLANDISHMENTS IN HOPES OF WOOING ADDITIONAL ARAB FUNDS. MARXISTS REJECT OUT OF HAND ANY COMPROMISE WITH ARAB OR ISLAMIC MODERATION IN CARRYING OUT THEIR MARXIST ARCHITECTURE.

9. WHY SOVIET EMBASSY MIGHT HAVE SUPPORTED ATTEMPT TO OUST SIDAD IS MORE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN. WHILE WE ARE NOT RPT NOT CONVINCED THAT SOVIET EMBASSY WAS INVOLVED, NEVERTHELESS WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT EITHER SAMANTAR OR POLITICAL OFFICE WOULD HAVE TAKEN INITIATIVE WITHOUT SOVIET ENCOURAGEMENT. PERHAPS SVIETS WERE SIMPLY UNABLE TO CONTROL EVENTS. IT MAY BE THAT PLOT-MAKERS WERE RELYING ON SOVIET SUPPORT IF THEY SUCCEEDED, BUT ALSO RELYING ON SOVIET PROTECTION IF THEY FAILED, AS THEY EVIDENTLY DID.

10. ONE REASON FOR SOVIET DISSATISFACTION WITH SIAD MIGHT HAVE

BEEN THEIR APPRECIATION OF EXTENT OF EROSION OF HIS POPULAR SUPPORT AND WIDESPREAD DE CONTENT IN MOGADISCIO AND ELSEWHERE. THEY MAY HAVE FELT THAT, WHILE SIAD HAD DONE MUCH TO CONSOLIDATE HIS PERSONAL RULE, HE WAS FALLING BEHIND IN CREATING PARTY INSTITUTIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE PERPETUATED SOVIET INFLUENCE REGARDLESS OF SIAD'S FUTURE FATE WITH SIAD'S UNPOPULARITY GROWING AND WITH MUCH OF THAT OPPOSITION NOW IMPLACABLE AS RESULT OF KILLING OF SHEIKHS, SOVIETS MAY HAVE FELT THAT SIAD'S DAYS NUMBERED IN ANY CASE AND THAT THEY SHOULD MOVE BEFORE HE WAS OUSTED BY ELEMENTS THEY COULD NOT CONTROL.

10. IT IS INTERESTING THAT BEST INFORMED AND MOST SKEPTICAL ARAB DIPLOMATS, INCLUDING THOSE WITH CONTACTS IN PRESIDENCY AND NSS, DOUBT THAT SIAD'S RECENT MILD CONCESSIONS TO ARAB CAUSE WERE AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR IN REPORTED OUSTER ATTEMPT. THEY INCLINED TO BELIEVE SIAD PARTICIPATION IN ARAB LEAGUE IS AS SOVIET MOUTHPIECE IN ANY CASE AND THAT SIAD WILL NOT CHANGE HIS FUNDAMENTAL POLICY ORIENTATION UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. THEY ARE THUS PUZZLED BY SOVIET INVOLVEMENT, WHICH THEY NEVERTHELESS TEND TO BELIEVE. ONE ARAB SOURCE SAYS SIAD PRESENTED HANDWRITTEN NOTE TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR MONTH AGO TELLING USSR THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD IT PROVIDE AID -- ECONOMIC OR OTHERWISE -- TO ETHIOPIAN REGIME, SINCE SOVIET ASSISTANCE WOULD ONLY DELAY INEVITABLE COLLAPSE OF

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EMPIRE. SOVIET EMBASSY DID NOT LIKE SIAD IMPERATIVE AND BEGAN TO CONSPIRE HIS OVERTHROW. (WE DON'T BELIEVE THIS HOLDS WATER.)

11. ONLY OFFICIAL EVIDENCE OF INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE WAS EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED IN MARCH 21 EDITION OF HORSEED. EDITORIAL ATTACKS IDEOLOGICAL OPPORTUNISTS OF BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT. SAYS THAT SOMALI PEOPLE MUST FIGHT AGAINST QTE VERBAL EXTREMISM UNQTE AND RECALLS LENIN'S WORD TO THE EFFECT THAT EXTREMISM IS QTE INFLAMMABLE DISEASE OF COMMUNISM UNQTE. IT IS REASONABLE TO CONCLUDE THAT POLITICAL OFFICE EXTREMISTS ARE TARGET OF EDITORIAL FIRE.

12. WHILE WE CANNOT COMPLETELY VOUCH FOR ACCURACY OF FOREGOING SCENARIO, INCLUDING WHO IS UNDER DETENTION AND WHO IS NOT, IT IS NEVERTHELESS CLEAR THAT INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE HAS BEEN GOING ON BEHIND SCENES IN MOGADISCIO THESE PAST TWO WEEKS. WHAT FINAL RESULTS WILL BE ARE AT THIS POINT AS MURKY AND UNCERTAIN AS THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THEY'VE TAKEN PLACE. KIDNAPPING OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR GUEURY APPEARS TO BE SYMPTOM OF CURRENT INSTABILITY, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT CERTAIN AT THIS POINT WHOSE PURPOSE IT SERVES -- THE INS OR THE OUTS. SIAD IS STILL IN.

HAMRICK

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